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But it is the new interpretation of Division that gives a name to Hamilton's new mathematical engine. A quotient is the representation of the ratio or relation of two quantities to each other. But the relation of two sides of a triangle to each other requires for its complete expression at least four (*quater*) numbers. One number is required to express the relative length of the two sides; another to express the angle which they make with each other; and two more are required to express the position of the plane of the triangle,— what angle, for instance, it makes with the meridian and what with the horizon.

It is simply the patient working out of this fundamental idea, that a line has direction as well as length, that has built this eternal monument to the glory of Hamilton of Dublin, which must command the admiration even of those who appreciate more easily the labors of Hamilton of Edinburgh.

ART. IX. — *Life Pictures: from a Pastor's Note-Book.* By ROBERT TURNBULL. New York: Sheldon, Blakeman, & Co. 1857. 12mo. pp. 342.

WE have not taken this book as our text, because it is in every, or even in any, respect its author's most noteworthy book. But it is his latest, and he has been so long and so usefully before the literary world, that we should do ourselves injustice in not availing ourselves of the opportunity he now offers us of rendering him justice, though tardy. His "Christ in History," which we characterized in a "critical notice" of half a dozen lines, might have afforded an easier theme for a journal precluded, equally by our own sense of fitness and the just expectations of our public, from discussions which trench upon the grounds of controversial theology. In that work there was not a leading view or pervading sentiment, and hardly a subsidiary thought, which could fail of the entire assent of all Christian readers, while in the work now in hand

the author's own creed and ritual, though not obtrusively urged, are necessarily made somewhat prominent.

The first thought that suggests itself concerning Dr. Turnbull's style is, that it eludes criticism. Apart from the ideas and sentiments which it expresses, it has no striking traits that demand either praise or censure; unless this negative statement be in itself the highest praise. His diction is never inflated, or ambitious, or redundant; for he evidently never writes for the sake of airing his vocabulary, or with the purpose of attracting notice or acquiring reputation merely as a writer. On the other hand, there are no marks of negligence and no sins against good taste; for these cannot be even in the rapid composition of a man whose native powers and liberal culture conspire to give him free command of language. In fine, Dr. Turnbull's sole aim evidently is the direct and intelligible expression of his thought, — the transfer by the simplest means possible of what lies in his own mind to the mind of his reader. In the singleness of this aim, he perhaps sometimes omits legitimate and graceful modes of persuasion and impression, glances from a topic before he has exhausted its wealth of argument or motive, and makes less than he easily might of openings for appeal to the fancy and the emotional nature. We are occasionally annoyed by the brevity of a strain which we would gladly have prolonged, and especially by the very cursory treatment of scenes or events in themselves deeply pathetic; and yet we are inclined to think it the more manly part for the author to leave his readers to do their own weeping, instead of playing *Melpomene* at every hand's turn.

Dr. Turnbull is a strong and earnest worker in the highest department of thought and effort. He has faith in Christianity, not only as the Gospel of redemption to the isolated soul, but as a regenerating force, whose development has given and will give the key-note to all history, and whose workings, whether traced in the great heart of humanity along the ages, or analyzed in the life-experience of the individual, are the surest evidence of its Divine source and mission. He is earnestly solicitous to exalt this force to its due place in the esteem of influential minds, and to imbue with its spirit those

whose action is to mould the nearer, and thus the more distant, future of our country and our common Christendom. This aim, so broad and high, is of course incompatible with sectarianism, or with other than the most comprehensive views and the most catholic sympathies. His books are thus adapted to win the interest, sustain the faith, and stimulate the courage, of Christians of every denomination, and can in no sense be deemed the exclusive concern or property of those appertaining to his own section of the Church. And here we ought to explain what we said with reference to the incidentally denominational character of the book now under review. It is a record of facts and conversations that have fallen within his own knowledge and experience; and, as he is a Calvinistic Baptist, of course his walks of social intercourse and professional duty have for the most part either lain within or led to the fold to which his own pastorate belongs. His specific purpose in this work we can best define by quoting a portion of his Preface.

“The object of the following ‘Life Pictures,’ including narratives, conversations, letters, and so forth, is to bring out, in concrete form, the true idea of the inner or divine life.

“It is designed especially for inquiring minds, haunted, perhaps, by the prevalent scepticism, or by other forms of doubt.

“The spiritual life is ever a struggle with opposing elements; and in almost every mind there comes a period of doubt and conflict, always painful, sometimes appalling. This is the case especially with strong, contemplative natures, who revolve the problem of life in its deeper significance.

“Such are to be found in all spheres, whether of professional or of business life; and often, when we least suspect it, in the bosom of our families.

“Doubt, indeed, is the disease of this inquisitive, restless age. It is the price we pay for our advanced intelligence and civilization. It is the dim night of our resplendent day. But as the most beautiful light is born of darkness, so the faith which springs from conflict is often the strongest and best.

“From an intimate acquaintance, during a pastorate of a quarter of a century, with a great variety of minds, many of them reclaimed from scepticism, the author supposed he might prepare a work which would be useful in this direction. The experience of some of these reclaimed sceptics is given in this volume.

“ Other sketches and illustrations are added, to bring out, as vividly as possible, the various phases of Christian experience, from its beginning in regeneration to its consummation in glory. The author believes that it is our privilege and duty, as Christians, to rise into a higher plane of life than is generally hoped for in the present day. He is persuaded, also, that the true idea of Christianity, as a vital power, is the best antidote to infidelity. To aid in the attainment of that ‘ perfect love,’ which ‘ casteth out ’ both doubt and fear, is one aim of this work ; for in this consists the essence of the true life, which is ever a vital divine force or germ, the invariable tendency of which must be to beauty, fruitfulness, and joy. As it comes from God, it ascends to God. Hence it is fitly described as ‘ a life in God,’ ever blessed and immortal.” — pp. iii. — v.

In pursuance of this design, the author has evidently kept himself within the limits of fact, not only as regards the main outlines of each sketch, but as to the details in which fancy might often have striven to usurp the place of memory. The characters are not idealized, but are such as we have all met with, some of them commonplace characters, except as brought out in strong individuality by peculiar religious experiences, — others of them persons of rare gifts and merits, yet like the eminently good whom we have known, and not like the saints of fiction whom we never wish to know. The conversations in which the writer professes to have borne part are such as we can have no doubt took place ; and so far are they from being compressed into the prim, artificial moulds in which book-dialogues are often cast, that we can hardly conceive of such *talks* being written down except from memory. Objections and difficulties are met in these colloquies with great skill indeed, but in the off-hand way in which a man of the author's large resources might have met them without specific preparation, not with the elaborate and exhausting treatment which they would have received in his study. The book would have been more exciting, had Dr. Turnbull drawn upon his imagination for characters and incidents ; but to us it is immeasurably more interesting and valuable, as a transcript of fact and experience, than had it been merely his own opinions and speculations dramatized.

We are thankful to Dr. Turnbull for not having given us another volume of religious fiction. We believe works of

this kind to be injurious in precise proportion to their reputed excellence, that is, to their vividness of character-painting, their minuteness of detail, and their religiousness of tone. When skilfully written, they present ideals of attainment and experience, which either cannot be reached by frail humanity, or which are ill adapted to the condition and needs of the world as it is; and in the former case they dishearten, in the latter they mislead, aspirants for goodness, while in both they tend to make the working-day piety of the current age seem low and vapid. We have read, we cannot say how often, and with an interest that never wanes, "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain"; but we should hardly like to put the story into the hands of the class of persons for whom it was specially designed. We have known not a few very devout persons in humble and obscure conditions, and are sure that the best of them could not for his life talk as the "Shepherd" does; and we should expect only to cast reproach on their plain and simple way of acting out their Christian principle, by holding forth his grandiloquent discourse as a model for them. If we are to have religious fiction, let it, like Bunyan's great prose epic, appropriate to itself realms of fancy not occupied by actual life. Vision and allegory are legitimate vehicles of instruction and impression; for they may inspire and invigorate the reader without creating false expectations. They may fill the soul with noble and holy thought, without offering unattainable models, or pouring contempt on the simple, unpretending forms in which true religion incarnates itself in the walks of common life. They are penitence, duty, prayer, and praise personified, not men travestied. Above all, for argumentative purposes, religious fiction is worse than worthless; for there is no power of conviction or persuasion in deeds which we know not that men have ever wrought, in utterances the like of which may never have proceeded from mortal lips, in experiences which may have had no prototype in fact.

But Biography is argument, and may be demonstration. What man has been, represents actual causes and forces in the moral universe. What man has attained, is attainable by others. What men have found true, they have proved true. Temptations, doubts, difficulties, which a single individual

has encountered and overcome, lie, no doubt, in the path of many, and it behooves such to know the modes and the weapons by which they have been met and vanquished. And as for what seem peculiar experiences, the probability is that they are not so. There are few or no moral idiosyncrasies. The religious teacher, who has studied and probed what seems to him a case entirely unprecedented, may feel sure, if he so shapes his discourse as to meet that one case, that he is giving utterance to what a score or a hundred of his congregation need to have said ; and by a homily, which is adapted, so far as he knows, to the demands of but a single soul, he will probably confer the highest spiritual benefit and obligation on a large class of his hearers.

We deem it, then, a crowning merit of the book before us, that it is biography, not fiction. Yet it is biography, not cold and unimpassioned, but cast into vivid, glowing forms by profound appreciation and intense sympathy ; and as it often approaches the confines of the unseen world, it borrows thence much of its fervent rhetoric and brilliant imagery, and expatiates with firm tread and clear vision in "the country of Beulah." We have seldom met with anything more beautiful than the following description of the renewed life of a haughty and selfish woman, a queenly wife, a passionately fond mother, whose heart is won for heaven by the death of the children who had been her idols.

"Heaven began to open upon Aurelia. God was just ; God also was wise and merciful. Death as well as life was his. Through his love and power, death, the curse, was transformed into a blessing. Indeed, under Christ and his transforming power, death is no longer death. Life is the preparation for heaven ; death, the dawn of an immortal day. Her children were not lost, not even to her. Ah ! how radiant and beautiful they appeared in the new spiritual world into which, by faith, she had come ! Their green graves, and the flowers blooming there, were the lowly but significant emblems of the supernal glory ; as, indeed, all the forms of the outward world are but the image and emblem of the heavenly state.

"Well, then, Aurelia must live, not for herself, but for others ; not for time, but for eternity. The long, long summer is dawning yonder upon the hills of God. A few more years, and she will pass to the heavenly home. This life is transient, and yet, as the pledge and prep-

aration of the eternal life, how significant and beautiful! How glorious even death, transfigured by the light of heaven, just as yon thunder-clouds upon the horizon are transfigured by the golden sunlight!

"Thus Aurelia walked in the light of God. Heaven was in her heart, including Christ and the holy angels, the spirits of the just, and all the glorified children, who wander on the marge of the river of life, crowning themselves with unfading lilies!

"And as the light in an alabaster vase renders it luminous as well as beautiful, so the light in her soul shone from her face, and shed soft radiance around her. She was lovelier than ever; she was beautiful, especially to the wretched. She was happy, too, — happier far than in the days of her vanity. Indeed, she told a friend she was happy because she loved, — that she had never, till now, known true joy. The past was a splendid but deceitful masquerade, behind whose glancing forms lurked sin and death. But now she looked upon things as they were, and found that all was full of God, full of blessing. Earth and heaven were really one; for the former, like the morning, or the spring-time, was the pledge and preparation for the other.

"And thus Aurelia walked softly in the opening dawn of an eternal day." — pp. 288, 289.

We have also been impressed equally with the simplicity, the rationalness, and the beauty of the author's own views of the heavenly state, in his reported conversation with one, the days of whose slow and peaceful decline were passed "within sight of the city she was going to," and in near and happy communion with "the inhabitants thereof."

"She asked me, one day, what I thought of heaven, — whether it was a place, or simply a state or sphere.

"I replied, both; for while its essential felicity must consist in the flowering of our spiritual perfection, and must bear the same relation to our present state as summer to spring, or the 'white lily' to its stem and root, our finite natures demand locality and form, and must ever conceive of heaven as a glorious and blessed place.

"Yes, she said, it so seemed to her. She wanted to be at home there.

"'But will not the place,' she added, 'be very different from the one we now occupy?'

"'Of course, just as the risen body will be very different from the present. Yet they will each of them sustain an intimate relation to the other. 'Flesh and blood,' we are told, 'cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.' This gross,

changeable, and mortal frame will give place to one ethereal and perfect, or, as the Apostle Paul terms it, "spiritual" and "incorruptible." The old heavens and the old earth will pass away, but there will be "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Of course we cannot well conceive this new order of things now, just as a chrysalis, supposing it (for the sake of illustration) conscious and rational, and inspired with the hope of the strange and beautiful transformation through which it is to pass, could form no conception of the new world of sunshine and flowers in which, as a winged, ethereal creature, it will expatiate.'

"'But do you think,' she added, with animation, 'we shall know one another there?'

"'I see no reason to doubt it,' was my reply; 'for we shall certainly lose none of our essential faculties in heaven; nay, they will be greatly refined and exalted, — how far, of course, we cannot tell. But we are expressly assured that we shall know even as we are known. Besides, however ethereal or spiritual the glorified body may be, it will yet possess form; and, for my part, I see no reason to doubt that the old expression, the old familiar smile, which, after all, is more of the soul than of the body, will remain, and be recognized in that happy home.'

"'That is a pleasant thought,' said she, 'and I think it must be so. At any rate, we shall love one another there, as deeply and as tenderly as on earth, nay, more so, and that implies that we shall know each other.'

"'Of course; for heaven is diverse from earth only in this respect, that it is an advance in the order of things; and since we find, both in the processes of nature and of grace, the one state or form always presupposing the next, — nay, preparing for it, as the spring for the summer, the root the flower, the child the man, — so we must believe that heaven is but the "flower of this world's bud," — the perfect, resplendent day of this morning dawn. "There shall be no night there."'

"'Ah, then I shall be at home there, I am sure.'

"'Yes; the place, the sphere, the home, whatever you choose to call it, will be perfectly natural to you, and all its glorified inhabitants.'

"'Will it be one of repose or activity?'

"'Of both, in my humble opinion; for both exist in God; a fact symbolized in the stars, sweeping with inconceivable velocity through boundless space, but in such order as to secure the most perfect repose. We are creatures of activity and progress, and, even here, are never so happy as when bounding along in the full and orderly play of all our powers. But we are sadly clogged, and often wearied, with our work on earth; and so rest is grateful and refreshing. Night covers the

care-worn and weary with its dewy wings ; and thus we often conceive of heaven as a place of rest for weary, wandering feet ; and so it is, — how complete and blessed, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus only know. But as there is *no night there*, of course we shall suffer no bodily imperfection or painful toil. In the unclouded day, with minds clear, and bodies ethereal as the sunlight, nay, superior to it in purity and splendor, we shall revolve joyfully, like the stars around our central sun, ascending and descending on wings of fire, or sweeping far off in some magnificent orbit of duty and of joy.'

" ' Ah ! it seems to me,' said Mrs. ———, ' after all, it will be pleasanter to wander, as angels, with those we love, on the banks of the river of life, or to sit under the branches of the trees, or, lying on the sides of some sunny hill, to look far over the heavenly landscape, or the great crystal sea, with its ever-living, ever-musical waves.'

" ' But you forget,' said I, with a smile, ' that we are both speaking, in figures derived from earth, of what, while we believe and anticipate as something unspeakably delightful, cannot be adequately conceived. "*We see through a glass darkly.*" "*We know in part, and we prophesy in part.*" But one thing is clear, — transfigured and glorified as we shall be, after all, we shall be *ourselves* there ; and so the place, the sphere, will be home to us. Our heaven will be made up of divine thoughts, tender affections, bright fancies, high aims, generous impulses, sweet activities, and glorious hopes, perfect in their character, and boundless in their variety.' " — pp. 336 – 340.

The longest sketch in this volume is the story of the " Student-Sceptic," — the narrative of the lapse into unbelief, and the conversion, of one whose pride of intellect had driven him to that vague pantheism which is little else than an *alias* for atheism. In its downward steps, the course is precisely that measured by very many young men of brilliant promise and commanding influence ; its return-path, we fear, is not so often trodden, yet would be oftener, were not the union of religious zeal with gentleness and calm discretion so rare in the endeavor to win back those in error, — were not the war-horse, more frequently than his rider, the type of those who enter the lists with infidelity.

We apprehend that a very large amount of unbelief grows out of the conceit of knowledge and wisdom, which was never so rife as at the present day, and which characterizes equally the self-consciousness of individuals and their esti-

mate of the age. When mystery clung close to every object and event in the outward universe, before sweeping generalizations had enabled ignorance to put on the show of knowledge, while men still felt that they were strangers in an unknown world, the mind readily sought the repose of faith, and the idea of a positive revelation was congenial, as compensating for the doubt and darkness that rested upon nature by assurance and certainty in the domain of morals and the realm of spiritual being. But now the order of proximate causes is traced with a good degree of precision; phenomena are classified, and thus seem to be accounted for; and general terms, which are neither defined nor understood, — such as gravitation, affinity, electricity, magnetism, caloric, — delude men into the belief that they have laid bare the springs of universal nature and the causes of events. The veil of mystery is lifted a little way; the dense fog that hid even the nearest objects has risen from the ground, and hangs in clouds over our heads; and because we can for short distances see, and calculate, and predict, we imagine ourselves competent to solve all questions, and to attain ultimate truth, by our own unaided powers. We therefore apply our infinitesimal calculus to cosmogony, to ethics, to religion, and to the very source of being. It is as if the child who has just come into possession of a two-foot rule, and had ascertained by it the dimensions of his nursery, should forthwith start with it to measure the earth's circumference.

What has been said in scorn is profoundly true, — Ignorance is the mother of Faith; and intellectual humility can alone bring us to that craving for and trust in revelation which are essential characteristics of the Christian. The sceptic's fundamental error is in supposing himself or any child of man otherwise than profoundly ignorant. We are no more capable than the unlettered savage of determining ultimate causes. Our own being, and all being, are enigmas, which defy our attempts at solution. When we go back in our cosmogony to the commencement of the present cycle of events, and thence still backward to the beginning of each antecedent cycle of the geological epochs, we are arrested by miracle at every stage; and the more numerous the succes-

sive creations we are able to trace by infallible tokens, the more utterly impossible does it become for us to apply any known laws of causation,—the more imperatively are we constrained to the hypothesis of Omnipotent Wisdom as the sole fountain of life and of being. Then, too, as regards our relations to the external world, and to our fellow-citizens in it, while certain primal duties are engraved as with the point of a sunbeam, there are numerous questions of interest and obligation, which the more diligently we ponder, the less competent do we find ourselves to self-guidance,—the more urgent becomes our need of a law based on adequate authority,—the more cordially do we welcome the revelation which disentangles the blended threads of our destiny, and puts into our hands the clew to our true happiness and good. In like manner, when we look into the future, we are incapable alike of acquiescing in annihilation, and of determining the certainty and the mode of our continued life after the dissolution of the body. Our physics fail when we attempt to dissect, out of the earth-born and earth-doomed fabric, the germ of immortality. Our metaphysics, if they reach the idea of immaterial existence, have reached only a negative term, and are wholly unable to invest it with positive attributes. Thus baffled ontology attains its only possible terminus when it prepares us to accept the sublime disclosure of revelation,—“Eternal life is the gift of God through Christ.”

As our author, in his colloquies with the “student-sceptic,” conclusively shows, the law of causality is the sum of our philosophy. Every phenomenon is an effect, and implies a cause; every event is a transfer of force with a change of form, and implies an equal antecedent force in some pre-existing form. Whatever is in the effect must have resided in and emanated from the cause. But an infinite series of finite causes is inconceivable and absurd. We are necessarily led back in the series of causes to an intelligent First Cause, in whose being are comprehended all the attributes, all the forces, which have developed themselves in the entire universe. This argument, we conceive, has the demonstrative certainty of a *reductio ad absurdum* in mathematics. No third hypothesis is possible. The law of causation, which is a fundamen-

tal law of belief, of which we can no more divest ourselves than of the consciousness of our own being, excludes equally the spontaneous origin of the universe, and the *spontaneous* development of its higher and more perfect forms from lower and ruder. To the development theory, (leaving spontaneity aside,) science has conclusive objections; theology, none. Were it substantiated or made probable, it would only add intense vividness to the demonstration of the Divine existence and attributes. It supposes, at every stage of development, effects which their material causes were not adequate to produce, — effects whose contents, that is, whose elements and efficient forces, did not reside in their causes; and it thus would constrain the belief in an intelligent and Supreme Cause, whose agency alone could supply for each new order of effects the elements and forces that were not in their apparent and reputed causes. The alternative then lies between the infinite series of finite causes and the infinite First Cause; and the former is not one whit more rational than the pagan fiction of “the globe upon the elephant, the elephant upon the tortoise, the tortoise upon we know not what.”

In recapitulating the members of this old scholastic argument, we do not apprehend that there are among our readers any who need to be convinced of the being of God. But it is on the view presented by this argument, that miracle, prophecy, and revelation offer the least hold for scepticism and the strongest grounds of intrinsic probability. There are a large class of minds that seem to regard the Deity as the mere impersonation of general laws, inferior to them, bound by them, and incapable of transcending them, — a “constitutional monarch” of the universe. These laws have never been superseded within their experience, and from the paltry premises thus afforded they leap to the conclusion that they never have been and never can be superseded. God, they think, somehow owes allegiance to the established order of nature; and his sole place in the creation is as its conservator and administrator. But when we consider the Deity as the Primal Cause of all things, and perceive that at marked epochs of the material universe he has supplemented the inadequacy of proximate causes, it then becomes in the highest degree prob-

able that he has done the same in the realm, and for the benefit, of spiritual being; and all that we can require to substantiate individual instances of such intervention is, in the first place, proof of the urgent need of mankind; and, in the second, the same kind and degree of historical evidence on which we believe facts in accordance with the common order of nature. The urgent need is created by human ignorance, infirmity, and guilt. The evidence that this need was met in the Mosaic and Christian revelations is, to say the least, no less strong, we believe it much stronger, than exists with relation to events of equal antiquity which no one calls in question.

The growth of scepticism is, we think, often aided to a very great degree by lax notions as regards our responsibility for belief. Men suffer their faith to be stolen from them without an effort to retain it, in the easy, indolent feeling that belief is involuntary, and that opinions actually entertained can therefore be in no sense blameworthy. But, as Dr. Turnbull shows conclusively in one of his papers, this line of argument proves too much. Our passions are involuntary. Their very name implies this. It denotes our being wrought upon by a force which we cannot control. Our passions are our masters, not we theirs. Let them be strong, it is wholly beyond our power to resist them; they have their will, and do their work, in defiance of principle. Cain could not help being angry with his brother. The fatal blow was a spontaneous, involuntary act. Feeling as he did, to strike was as inevitable as to breathe. Judas was overmastered by his avarice. When the money belonging to the apostolic college was in his hands, they closed upon it, not from cold, calculating dishonesty, but involuntarily. And when for the treachery of an hour he could get the wages of two months' honest industry, it was impossible for him to resist the temptation. In fine, the condition of the emotional nature is as little under our immediate control as the condition of our belief is. The same course of reasoning, therefore, which denies our accountability for unbelief and its consequences, would prove us not accountable for our passions and their consequences. The fallacy lies here. We are accountable for our passions and their consequences, because there are modes of self-disci-

pline by which their growth may be prevented or their excesses subdued. Cain, being virtually a maniac in his anger, could not help killing Abel; but his irascible temper in its earlier stages might have been restrained, and brought under the control of reason and principle. Judas, being intensely avaricious, could not help betraying his Master; but his avarice was made supreme by a series of frauds and pilferings, the earlier of which were strictly voluntary, and might have been omitted. In like manner, the youth, who hears and reads every specious argument against Christianity, and omits all investigation of its claims and evidences, cannot help being an infidel. But he knew at the outset the unequalled importance of the interests involved in his religious belief. He had it in his power to give serious heed to the Christian side of the argument. He might have cultivated the moral faculties, the virtuous habits, the devotional sentiments, which would have been the most effectual counterpoise to the sophistry which has victimized him. His involuntary unbelief may therefore have been the result of a series of voluntary omissions and compliances. And if so, he may be in the eye of a righteous God guiltily accountable for his unbelief, and for whatever he does or neglects to do in consequence of that unbelief. There is then nothing intrinsically unjust, gratuitously harsh, or inconsistent with the mild and loving character of the Founder of Christianity, in the sentence of condemnation which fell from his lips on "him that believeth not."

To pass to another topic involved in the record of experience under review, Christian faith implies a belief, not only in the external facts of the life of Christ, and in the doctrines taught by him, but also in the reality of the Divine influence upon the human soul. There are multitudes, who have no intellectual doubt of the facts or doctrines of Christianity, who yet are in no sense Christians. Their belief and their conduct are in opposition each to the other. They do what their faith condemns; they neglect what it requires. There is no point of contact between the contents of the intellect and the motive forces of the life. A connection needs to be established between these mutually repellent polarities;

and in the Christian consciousness it is the Divine Spirit that completes this connection. But at this point there is a prevalent scepticism among those who, in general terms, would call themselves Christian believers. They can trace no avenue by which God can enter into direct communion with the human soul. But do we know how our fellow-men speak to our souls, how Nature addresses our souls, how the knowledge of events reaches our souls? We can trace voices, objects, and occurrences from their impulse upon the organs of sense, through the nerves, to the brain, but no farther; and the throbbings of the nerves and the vibrations of the brain no more account for the ideas that reach the soul, than would the quiverings of a violin-string or the pulsations of a drum-head. The passage from the brain to the soul is for our philosophy as broad a chasm, as inexplicable a mystery, as that from God to the soul, — a chasm too which can be overleaped, a mystery which can be approximately solved, only by assuming the Divine presence and agency as the medium of intercourse between brain and soul, — by assuming that in God our souls, as well as our bodies, literally “live, and move, and have their being.” But if we are compelled to believe that God is our medium of communication with the outward world, we admit the existence, and the perpetual openness to him, of avenues of intercourse, along which he is surely as competent to transmit his own voice, as the voice of Nature or of man.

In this argument, we indeed presuppose the existence of the soul as an independent, immaterial essence; though we admit that the word *immaterial* — a negative term — conveys no clearly defined, positive conception. But that there is something in human nature which is not material, we know, if from nothing else, from the phenomena of memory. If the unnumbered words, dates, facts, and experiences that lie in our memory have each made some permanent notch, furrow, or mark, of whatever kind, or however minute, in the brain, the brain would have been too full in very infancy for another entry. It is, physically, as impossible for a life-record to be kept within the compass of a human brain, as it would be to keep a year's accounts of the United States treasury on a

sheet of note-paper. There is then for each of us an immaterial centre of conscious life, — a soul, whose existence we can demonstrate, but whose mode of action, though within our perpetual experience, is so entirely beyond our comprehension, as to compel our belief in the Divine agency in and upon it at all times. The exertion of that agency for our highest good presents itself, then, not as a separate and profounder mystery, but as an intrinsically probable, inseparable, and most congenial part of the great mystery of our existence.

The grounds of scepticism to which we have referred are speculative. We apprehend that a condition of mind ranging from indifference to utter unbelief is, also, often produced by defective manifestations of Christian character. Christianity suffers in the esteem of those beyond its pale, because it does so little for its disciples. But so far as its work is imperfectly wrought, Christians in fact are chargeable only with a portion of the blame. While it is their duty to exert, it is their necessity to receive, influence. While they are bound to elevate the general standard of character, they are in part drawn down by it. Yet, with all the abatement to be made on this score, it seems a mere truism to say that Christianity has produced more and better specimens of moral excellence than any or all other modes of religious culture. Were we to classify the men of the last eighteen centuries according to their belief or non-belief, as Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans, Infidels, and were we to select from each catalogue any number of names of the eminently good, we should find on the Christian list a series from St. Paul downward, every one of whom would confessedly hold a higher rank on the scale of moral excellence than the noblest exemplars of virtue on either of the other lists ; and on analyzing their characters and interrogating their self-consciousness, we should ascertain that they derived from, and ascribed to, the faith and ordinances of Christianity whatever of good there was in them. The most perfect blossoming and fruitage of humanity have been on scions grafted upon the Christian stock. Admit that these greatly good have been but few, still the argument derived from their excellence is not invalidated by their fewness. A single watch shows as much

skill as a thousand would. One world is as clear an evidence of the Divine attributes as myriads of worlds. One Christian, if he be the most perfect of the sons of men, and if his religion have made him so, is as thorough a demonstration of the unparalleled worth and power of Christianity as a regenerated universe would be.

We would go even further. Were not pre-eminent excellence to be found in the Christian camp, — did the Author of our religion stand alone and unapproached, as he stands alone and unequalled, — still did we perceive in Christianity doctrines which, if heartily embraced, motives which, if made supreme, influences which, if cordially welcomed, could not fail to create perfect characters, and were there in no other ethical or religious system an array of doctrines, motives, and influences adapted to produce a like result, we should be constrained to accept Christianity for what it is capable of effecting. This is our mode and ground of preference in all other departments of thought. Did we demand to see the perfect embodiment of principles before adopting them, there would not be a republican in the world. Political principles and institutions which, in the only country that has made trial of them under favorable auspices, leave three or four millions of slaves with no hope of emancipation, which permit a vast amount of official corruption, which not unfrequently elevate unfit men and bad men to higher places of trust and power than they could reach under a less popular administration, and which every year disgrace some one or more of our great cities by the excesses and atrocities of mob-law, might have a very strong case established against them, did we reason concerning them as we are too prone to reason about religion. We are republicans, not because the world has yet beheld the perfect working of republican principles, but because, as we look into their working power, we see in them that which, if embodied in its entirety and its purity, would constitute a model nation, a perfect commonwealth. The same course of argument, applied to Christianity, negatives whatever unfavorable inferences might be drawn from the imperfections of its disciples, and throws us back upon the intrinsic merits of

the system for the sole ground of our decision with reference to its divine origin and its claims on our belief and reverence.

But while we need not examples of Christian excellence to refute our scepticism, the exhibition of such examples is of the very highest value as subsidiary to our faith, and as enlisting our affection and our sympathy in the conclusions to which we are led by our logical judgment. In the volume before us, designed as it is to furnish an antidote to scepticism, Dr. Turnbull has done well to give us a choice selection of somewhat detailed Christian biographies. We have the life of William Bentley, one of the uneducated pioneer Baptist ministers of New England, a convert of the venerable Dr. Stillman, who from early manhood to a late old age labored with signal success and perpetual self-sacrifice for the salvation of souls, and whose courage, zeal, fidelity, and tenderness attested his close kindred of spirit with the equally plain and unlettered men who first went forth from Galilee with the message of the crucified Redeemer. We have next a sketch of Harvey Miller, a man whose extensive learning, ready wit, racy colloquial powers, eloquent address, and commanding talents were consecrated with undivided aim to the service of the Gospel, and whose death-chamber could hardly have been more radiant with the light and peace of heaven, had it been one of the "many mansions" behind the veil and beyond the shadow of death. Then we have a vivid portraiture of Daniel J. Glazier, called to his reward just as he was girding on his armor as a Christian minister, whose novitiate presented the ripe maturity of all evangelic graces, and whose perpetual aspiration for heaven, clear insight, and ardent love seemed prophetic of his early translation.

We have given but an imperfect outline of a book of a very high order of merit and usefulness. It is a precious contribution to religious literature and to the Christian evidences. Its narrative style and its variety of character and scene cannot but conciliate the interest of readers of every class; its reasonings, incidental and conversational as they are, are profound and cogent; and its devout spirit must insure for it an enviable mission among those who need such helps for their faith and piety.